NUMB. XXXI.

The GUARDIAN.

Fortem posce animum — Juv.

Thursday, April 16. 1713.

MY Lady *Lizard* is never better pleased than when she sees her Children about her engaged in any profitable Discourse. I found her last Night sitting in the midst of her Daughters, and forming a very beautiful Semi-circle about the Fire. I immediately took my place in an Elbow Chair, which is always left empty for me in one Corner.

Our Conversation fell insensibly upon the Subject of Happiness, in which every one of the young Ladies gave her Opinion, with that Freedom and Unconcernedness which they always use when they are in Company only with their Mother and myself.

Mrs. *Jane* declared, that she thought it the greatest Happiness to be married to a Man of Merit, and placed at the Head of a well regulated Family. I could not but observe, that in her Character of a Man of Merit, she gave us a lively Description of *Tom. Worthy*, who has long made his Addresses to her. The Sisters did not discover this at first, till she began to run down Fortune in a Lover, and among the Accomplishments of a Man of Merit, unluckily mentioned white Teeth and black Eyes.

Mrs. *Annabella*, after having rallied her Sister upon her Man of Merit, talked much of Conveniences of Life, Affluence of Fortune, and Easiness of Temper in one whom she should pitch upon for a Husband. In short, tho' the Baggage would not speak out, I found the Sum of her Wishes was a rich Fool, or a Man so turned to her Purposes, that she might enjoy his Fortune, and insult his Understanding.

The Romantick *Cornelia* was for living in a Wood among Choirs of Birds, with Zephyrs, Echo's and Rivulets to make up the Consort; she would not seem to include a Husband in her Scheme, but at the same time talked so passionately of Cooing Turtles, Mossie Banks, and Beds of Violets, that one might easily perceive she was not without Thoughts of a Companion in her Solitudes.

Miss *Betty* placed her *Summum bonum* in Equipages, Assemblies, Balls and Birth-nights, talked in Raptures of Sir *Edward Shallow*'s gilt Coach, and my Lady *Tattle*'s Room, in which she saw Company; nor would she have easily given over, had she not observed that her Mother appeared more serious then ordinary, and by her Looks shewed that she did not approve such a Redundance of Vanity and Impertinence.

My Favourite, the *Sparkler*, with an Air of Innocence and Modesty which is peculiar to her, said that she never expected such a thing as Happiness, and that she thought the most any one could do, was to keep themselves from being uneasie; for as Mr. *Ironside* has often told us, says she, we should endeavour to be easie here, and happy hereafter: At the same time she begged me to acquaint them by what Rules this ease of Mind, or if I would please to call it Happiness, is best attained.

My Lady *Lizard* joined in the same Request with her youngest Daughter, adding with a serious Look, The thing seemed to her of so great Consequence, that she hoped I would for once forget they were all Women, and give my real Thoughts of it with the same justness I would use among a Company of my own Sex. I complied with her Desire, and communicated my Sentiments to them on this Subject, as near as I can remember pretty much to the following purport.

As nothing is more natural than for every one to desire to be happy, it is not to be wondered at that the wisest Men in all Ages have spent so much time to discover what Happiness is, and wherein it chiefly consists. An eminent Writer, named *Varro*, reckons up no less than two hundred eighty eight different Opinions upon this Subject; and another, called *Lucian*, after having given us a long Catalogue of the Notions of several Philosophers, endeavours to shew the Absurdity of all of them, without establishing any thing of his own.

That which seems to have made so many err in this Case, is the resolution they took to fix a Man's Happiness to one determined Point, which I conceive cannot be made up but by the Concurrence of several Particulars.

I shall readily allow *Vertue* the first place, as she is the Mother of *Content*. It is this which calms

out

(Price Two Pence.)

our Thoughts, and makes us survey our selves with Ease and Pleasure. *Naked Vertue*, however, is not alone sufficient to make a Man happy. It must be accompanied with at least a moderate Provision for all the Necessities of Life, and not ruffled and disturbed by bodily Pains. A Fit of the Stone was sharp enough to make a Stoick cry out, That *Zeno* his Master taught him false, when he told him that Pain was no Evil.

But besides this, *Vertue* is so far from being alone sufficient to make a Man happy, that the excess of it in some particulars, joined to a soft and Feminine Temper, may often give us the deepest Wounds, and chiefly contribute to render us uneasie. I might instance in *Pity*, *Love* and *Friendship*. In the two last Passions it often happens, that we so entirely give up our Hearts, as to make our Happiness wholly depend upon another Person; a trust for which no human Creature, however excellent, can possibly give us a sufficient Security.

The Man therefore who would be truly happy, must besides an habitual Vertue, attain to such a *Strength of Mind*, as to confine his Happiness within himself, and keep it from being dependent upon others. A Man of this Make will perform all those Good-natured Offices that could have been expected from the most bleeding Pity, without being so far affected at the common Misfortunes of human Life, as to disturb his own repose. His Actions of this kind are so much more meritorious than another's, as they flow purely from a Principle of Virtue, and a Sense of his Duty; whereas a Man of a softer Temper, even while he is assisting another, may in some measure be said to be relieving himself.

A Man endowed with that *Strength of Mind* I am here speaking of, tho' he leaves it to his Friend or Mistress to make him still more happy, does not put it in the Power of either to make him miserable.

From what has been already said it will also appear, that nothing can be more weak than to place our Happiness in the Applause of others, since by this means we make it wholly independent of our selves. People of this Humour, who place their chief Felicity in Reputation and Applause, are also extreamly subject to Envy, the most painful as well as the most absurd of all Passions.

The surest means to attain that *Strength of Mind*, and independent State of Happiness I am here recommending, is A virtuous Mind sufficiently furnished with Ideas to support Solitude, and keep up an agreeable Conversation with it self. Learning is a very great help on this occasion, as it lays up an infinite number of Notions in the Memory, ready to be drawn out, and set in order upon any occasion. The Mind often takes the same pleasure in looking over these her Treasures, in augmenting and disposing them into proper forms, as a Prince does in a Review of his Army.

At the same time I must own, that as a mind thus furnished feels a secret pleasure in the Consciousness of its own Perfection, and is delighted with such occasions as call upon it to try its force, a lively Imagination shall produce a pleasure very little inferior to the former in Persons of much weaker Heads. As the first therefore may not be improperly called, *The Heaven of a Wise Man*; the latter is extreamly well represented by our Vulgar Expression, which terms it *A Fool's Paradise*. There is, however, this difference between them, that as the first naturally produces that Strength and Greatness of Mind I have been all along describing as so essential to render a Man happy, the latter is ruffled and discomposed by every Accident, and lost under the most common Misfortune.

It is this Strength of Mind that is not to be overcome by the Changes of Fortune, that rises at the sight of Dangers, and could make *Alexander* (in that Passage of his Life so much admired by the Prince of *Conde*) when his Army mutinied, bid his Soldiers return to *Macedon*, and tell their Countrymen that they had left their King conquering the World; since for his part he could not doubt of raising an Army wherever he appeared. It is this that chiefly exerts itself when a Man is most oppressed, and gives him always in proportion to whatever Malice or Injustice would deprive him of. It is this, in short, that makes the virtuous Man insensibly set a Value upon himself, and throws a Varnish over his Words and Actions, that will at last command Esteem, and give him a greater Ascendant over others, than all the Advantages of Birth and Fortune.

To the PRINTER.

SIR,

'I Have frequently taken great Satisfaction in 'hearing the Compositures of *Nicolino Haym*, 'a Man of great Merit and Skill in his Profession, 'accompanied with so much Modesty, that he loses 'the Force which our Affectation of Foreigners 'might have towards his Advancement, and is, by 'his Deference and Respect to us, under the same 'Disadvantage as if he were born among us; there'fore I direct you to insert his *Advertisement* with 'all the Stars, Daggers, Hands, Turn'd Comma's 'and *Nota Bene's* which you have in the House, 'and to omit no Variation of Letter, by way of 'Capital, Small Capital, Italick, or any other re'commendatory Artifice in Printing, which I have 'privately ordered you to use from time to time to 'set off my own Writings.

NESTOR IRONSIDE.

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"☞ *N.B.* At Mr. *Hickford*'s Great Dancing "Room over against the Tennis Court in St. *James's Street* near the "*Hay-Market*, on *Friday* next, being the 17th of this present *April*, "will be perform'd a Consort of MUSICK by *NICOLINO* "*HAYM*, and others. The Tickets to be delivered out at Mr. "*White*'s Chocolate House in St. *James's Street*, this Day and to morrow.

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